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Message Text

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FOR CARTER FROM PA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (VANCE)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HEREWITH FULL TEXT NEW YORK TIMES BY-LINER, BY HENRY KAMM, TUESDAY, AUGUST 8, ENTITLED "VIETNAM'S PREMIER SAYS HE WANTS U.S. FRIENDSHIP."

2. BANGKOK, THAILAND, AUGUST 7--PRIME MINISTER PHAM VAN DONG OF VIETNAM TOLD AN AMERICAN DELEGATION SENT TO HANOI BY SENATOR EDWARD M. KENNEDY THAT HIS COUNTRY WANTED NOT ONLY A RECONCILIATION WITH THE UNITED STATES, BUT ALSO NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS AND "INDEED FRIENDSHIP" BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONS.

3. THE DELEGATION ARRIVED HERE TODAY AFTER A WEEK'S STAY IN VIETNAM. IT BROUGHT OUT OF THE COUNTRY 19
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CHILDREN AND 10 WIVES WHO HAD BEEN SEPARATED FROM THEIR AMERICAN FATHERS AND HUSBANDS BY THE COMMUNIST VICTORY IN 1975. THE 29 WILL BE TAKEN TO THE UNITED STATES FOR THE FIRST VIETNAMESE-AMERICAN FAMILY REUNIFICATION.

4. DELEGATION MEMBERS REPORTED THAT VIETNAMESE

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OFFICIALS, INCLUDING THE PRIME MINISTER, HAD EXPRESSED

READINESS TO SPEED FAMILY REUNIFICATIONS WITHOUT IMPOSING ANY CONDITIONS ON THE UNITED STATES. IN THE PAST, VIETNAM HAS INSISTED THAT AMERICA FIRST AGREE TO EXTENSIVE WAR-RECONSTRUCTION AID. AND UNTIL RECENTLY, HANOI'S POSITION HAD BEEN THAT FAMILY REUNIFICATION WAS A CONSULAR MATTER THAT COULD BE SETTLED ONLY AFTER THE UNITED STATES HAD AGREED TO ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS.

5. THE VISIT INCLUDED EXTENSIVE TOURS TO HO CHI MINH CITY, FORMERLY SAIGON, AND OTHER AREAS.

6. JERRY M. TINKER, A STAFF MEMBER OF THE SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE, SAID THAT MR. DONG HAD ASSERTED THAT VIETNAM CONSIDERED IT ITS DUTY TO ACT POSITIVELY ON LEGITIMATE FAMILY-REUNION CASES. MR. TINKER IS STAFF CONSULTANT OF THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE'S REFUGEE SUBCOMMITTEE, OF WHICH SENATOR KENNEDY, DEMOCRAT OF MASSACHUSETTS, IS CHAIRMAN.

7. MR. TINKER ALSO SAID THAT VU HOANG, THE DIRECTOR OF CONSULAR SERVICES OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, HAD ASSURED HIM THAT FAMILY REUNION COULD ALSO INCLUDE REFUGEES WHO LEFT VIETNAM AFTER 1975. THIS WAS AN APPARENT ALLUSION TO THE THOUSANDS OF "BOAT PEOPLE" WHO ARE STILL STREAMING
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OUT OF VIETNAM. MR. TINKER EMPHASIZED, HOWEVER, THAT THE VIETNAMESE OFFICIAL HAD POINTED OUT THE TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES OF ESTABLISHING FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND LOCATING RELATIVES STILL IN VIETNAM.

8. DELEGATION MEMBERS SAID THEY HAD SENSED A STRONG DESIRE ON THE PART OF THE HANOI GOVERNMENT TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. A MEMBER SAID THAT THEY HAD HEARD NO CRITICISM DURING THEIR STAY OF PAST AMERICAN ACTIONS.

9. DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER PHAN HIEN, IN A TOAST DURING A DINNER FOR THE DELEGATION, SAID THAT HANOI DESIRED "NORMALIZATION" OF RELATIONS UETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, AND WOULD ATTACH NO PRECONDITIONS TO IT.

1O. ACCORDING TO ARCHBISHOP PHILIP M. HANNAN OF NEW ORLEANS, A MEMBER OF THE DELEGATION, VIETNAMESE OFFICIALS ALSO MADE IT CLEAR THAT VIETNAM WOULD ACCEPT ASSISTANCE, ESPECIALLY FOOD AND MEDICINES, FROM BOTH OFFICIAL AND PRIVATE AMERICAN SOURCES. HE ADDED THAT HE HAD BEEN STRUCK 3Y THE FACT THAT A SOPHISTICATED AMERICAN X-RAY

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MACHINE WAS STANDING IDLE IN A HOSPITAL IN HO CHI MINH
CITY BECAUSE VIETNAM HAD BEEN UNABLE TO OBTAINFILM FOR
IT.

11. THE AMERICAN GROUP WENT TO VIETNAM AFTER HANOI HAD
INFORMED SENATOR KENNEDY IN MAY THAT IT HAD DECIDED TO
INITIATE FAMILY REUNIFICATIONS FOR AMERICANS. THE
SENATOR HAD LONG REQUESTED SUCH REUNIFICATIONS. CHRISTOPHER

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